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FOURTH STREET

RUSSELL

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FOURTH STREET



**FOURTH STREET LOOKING EAST FROM
NICOLLET AVENUE**

FOURTH STREET

BY
A. J. RUSSELL



47-49 FOURTH STREET
MINNEAPOLIS
1917

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. . . *The traffic of Jacob's Ladder*
Pitched between Heaven and Charing Cross.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

FOURTH STREET

I

IN the geography of streets, Fourth Street is a paradox. It runs west to go north, and it runs east to go south. A study of the map of Minneapolis, showing the bends of the Mississippi River, explains something of this paradox. Fourth Street also runs downward towards the center of the earth till it opens to the imagination the old caverns hollowed out in the sandstone by the curious, underground, wandering river, reaching with creeping indefinite fingers for the distant Gulf. Into these caverns the engineers of the city's sewer department penetrated. While they did not consider them a menace to the city's stability, they did, nevertheless, shore them up with massive pillars of cement and rock to make

certain that there would be no future "faults" or slips in the strata. Fourth Street's foundations are firm, despite sensational stories to the contrary sent to eastern newspapers.

Winding upward again, the street touches heaven. Charing Cross is but one of the terminals of Jacob's Ladder. Another is found on Fourth Street. And at all times of the day and of the night, I have seen the patient people going up and down, each carrying his burden. The dull rain fell or a deadly cold enveloped, and everything seemed like a tale often retold. But on special days, as the evenings came in, I have seen the clouds break, and down the wide street the poet's "pure splendor poured." Then appeared the celestial highway and the celestial host.

Like the people who traverse them, streets have their genders. Some are feminine and constant. Others are masculine and venturesome. And I have wandered, late at night or on

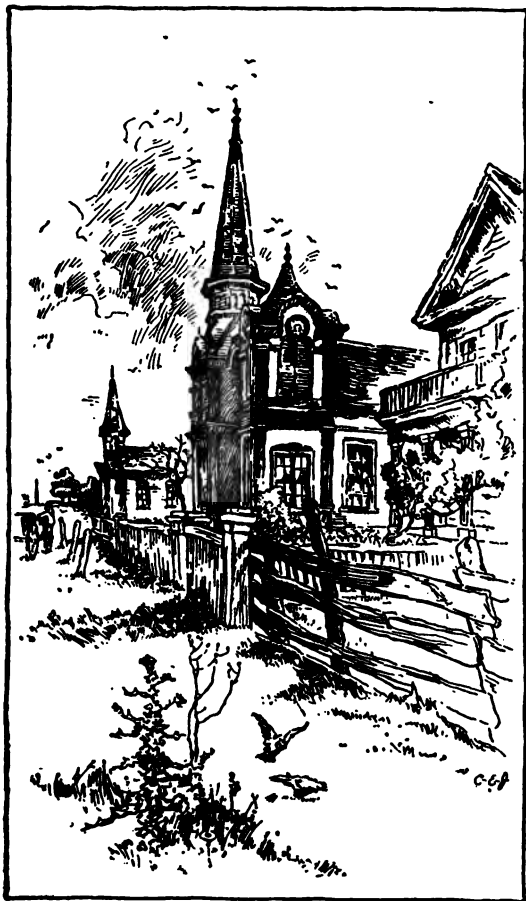
dreary Sunday afternoons, down long reaches of neuter streets — and found nothing. Moods of their own, optimistic, melancholic, witty, gay, and lively, streets also have; and characteristic voices as well, either inarticulate cries or spoken words. Other streets maintain an impassive silence. Whatever noise of men or of traffic would break in upon it by day or by night, the real note of Fourth Street is too deep to register in the human ear. But an inner sense obtains it nevertheless. I love these deep soundless streets.

But there was a time when Fourth Street spoke with another voice. Here the mighty river of the geological periods eddied and swirled. It is probable that this great wall of water came down through the channel now represented by Glenwood, Brownie, Cedar, Lake of the Isles, Calhoun, and Harriet lakes and found its point of union with the Minnesota through the natural hol-

lows beyond. But the glacial period deposited its millions of tons of gravel and boulders in the channel, forming the hills of the Lowry Hill range, damming the river, turning it into Fourth Street and covering all this plateau district. From the southern bank of this great flood of water, the Lowry Hill and Washburn Hill frontages, prehistoric man looked out over the foaming current and listened with awe to the liquid voices of Fourth Street.

Even the memory of E. A. Bromley, the street's official antiquarian, fails to carry us back to those eras and his incomparable collection is bare of daguerreotypes picturing its scenes. We can only guess at the voices of Fourth Street then.

"Why, brothers and sisters," cried an exhorter trying to describe the reaches of eternity, "after millions and billions of centuries had rolled away, it would still be a hundred thousand years to breakfast time!"



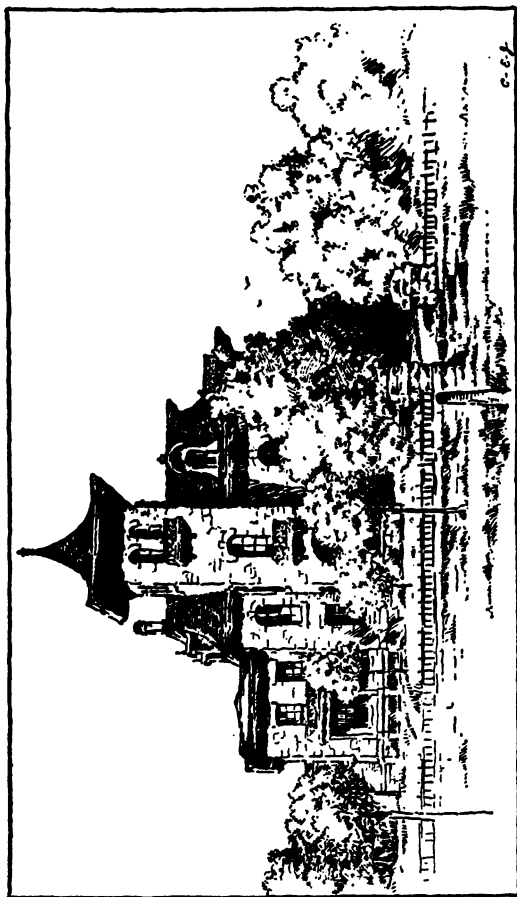
FOURTH STREET IN THE '60's

"Uncle John" Daubney, of Taylor's Falls, who, at the age of 96, returned to Minneapolis for a brief visit, heard, seventy years ago, the leafy murmur of Fourth Street or of the place where it was to be. In the year 1846, a cow would have found no path here. Instead of a city and a highway, Mr. Daubney saw a plateau covered with brush and scrub oak trees. Where the *Globe* building now stands, and so on to Hennepin avenue, a little green hill covered with brush and trees sloped gently up and away. Another hill in the general vicinity of Fourth Street and Second avenue south was cut through during the Civil War to let Second avenue down town. The indignant inhabitants, whose homes were left high in air, called the avenue Dutch Gap, from the name of a fierce battle of that bloody year. A thousand times I have constructed for myself the Fourth Street location as it was be-

FOURTH STREET 15

fore Colonel John H. Stevens laid it out on his farm and gave it a name to endure as long as men run up and down upon it.

The curtain of the nearer past lifts an edge and we begin to catch more familiar accents. Plymouth Church stands on the corner of Nicollet avenue and Fourth Street, facing down town, where the Thompson store to-day dispenses soda and medicines. On the site where the Vendome Hotel now offers more material hospitality, Westminster Presbyterian Church looms up. On the lot north is the old Pettit home. Across the street Beal's pioneer photographic gallery, just moved up from Washington, offers to take your likeness for posterity to admire. Dr. Sample resides next door. Miss Grabbill's millinery establishment graces the corner of Fourth and Nicollet where the Milwaukee railroad now sells tickets. Two of the private houses that attract the eye by their



THE S. C. GALE RESIDENCE

magnificence are the Deshon place, First avenue and Fourth Street, and, directly across the avenue, the old S. C. Gale homestead.

These are the years called "the '70's." Mollie Deshon dances gaily out of the house and across the lawn, springing to the Fourth Street sidewalk to greet her nearest friend, Luella Brigham, from the Brigham house, where the Loeb Arcade now assists us to turn the Fifth street corner at Hennepin avenue. Together they go cheerfully up the street. The beautiful Kate Deshon looks after them from the doorway. Across the avenue Eddie Gale is playing on the lawn. Around the corner, like a deer, dashes little Carl Wallace on his way up First avenue to escape capture by Billy or Bud Deshon. Miss I. M. Grabill walks sedately down the street to her millinery store. Ed Bromley meets Ed Clement on the street and they stop to wonder what Fourth Street will see

18 *FOURTH STREET*

in the way of new buildings and improvements by the beginning of another century. They pronounce the wonderfully suggestive figures "1900" and look at each other smilingly, doubting if they live to greet that far time.

The town is "booming." It is 1877. Joe Mannix has arrived. Nearly all of the years since 1877, he has spent chronicling the events of Fourth Street and if he has made an enemy in that time, I have not heard of it. As I am writing this page, he is lying in the hospital overlooking the beautiful Loring Park. "What I have written may not be literature," said Joe as I stood by his bed, "but I always tried to tell a straight story and to chronicle things as they were."

In the winter of 1880, William Webster, born Foreman of the Composing Room, saw from the bay window of his Fourth Street boarding-house, where the Palace Building

now stands, a woman, "a beautiful woman," come out of the Deshon house, then a boarding-house itself. It was a bitterly cold day and the streets were icy. As she turned from the private walk to the street, she slipped and fell. A passing stranger helped her to arise and ascertained that she was unhurt. Who was she? Where is she today? Do her grandchildren walk these streets? Foolish questions! All trace of her is lost. The curtain has lifted just an edge, has shown the picture, and has dropped back again.

Fourth Street now to the Gale family tomcat is what Fleet Street was to Dr. Johnson. When the Northwestern Bank Building was constructed on the velvety lawn of this cat's former residence, the Gale descendants saw to it that a stone inscribed "To the Memory of Tom (as) Cat" was firmly imbedded in the walls to serve as a puzzle for future antiquarians. The Northwestern

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Bank, "the bank with the props," is the monument over the last resting place of this animal.

And now comes what is to me the thrilling event of the annals of modern Fourth Street. A belated pioneer arrives. Around the corner of Nicollet avenue walks a modern explorer looking for the old *Tribune* building, now the *Phoenix*, but first discovering, on the other side of the street, on the site of the present *Journal* building, Parcher's Livery Stable and its annual contribution of ten million flies. Over thirty years have passed since that clear, sunny, ambitious day in the autumn of the year. This was the West regarding which Horace Greeley had given such excellent advice! Here was the newest America in the rough! All things were possible here—provided one could secure work.

All the dreams of this wondrous year have come true, and more! To-



NORTHWESTERN NATIONAL BANK

day I own the street. No matter who may hold title to its real estate and to the splendid buildings that line it, the street itself is mine, by

right of actual possession (pedis possessio) over this long term of years.

"Mine by the right of the white election."

Its moods having been my moods and its trodden ways my ways for so long, it lacks nothing that Fleet Street, New Oxford Street, Broadway, Tremont Street, Michigan Avenue or Canal Street might offer. In this year of 1885 the street was entirely unpaved and it was deep with the snows of winter and thick with the mud of fall and spring.

Someone has elaborated a theory of the interpenetration of worlds. These worlds are in the same place, but one sees his own world only, never the other person's. Death does not result in a change of place, but gives another point of view of the same place. We apprehend the place by means of another sense apparatus and find it not the same, although it is the same.

In similar fashion, there is necessarily an interpenetration of Fourth Streets. To the Foreman of the Composing Room, my street is a fantastic and surprisingly unreal thoroughfare, a subject for laughter and for some contempt, as the vision of a partially deranged man, or of a humorist, one wilfully humorous, something that to the warped imagination appears to be, but is not. The tired business man from his Fourth Street shop also looks upon my street with wrinkled and disrespectful eye. For my street cares little for the value of the land by the front foot, it is totally oblivious of the rental values of the buildings that line it, or of the number of persons and vehicles that pass a given corner in a given time, astonishing the mind that there are so many who seem to wish to be elsewhere and who try to get there by way of Fourth Street.

To the animal that pulled the hack that once rattled the pavements and

awoke the midnight echoes, Fourth Street was merely a percept. To the animal man who walks it, the street begins to be something of a concept. He brings to it whatever of mind he has acquired in his climb, and his Fourth Street becomes as complex as the closet where Frank Nimmocks' vests hang. This concept of the street comprises the gambollings of the Flubdub Club, the profundities of the Eternity Club, R. F. Jones' tall hat and the heated discussions of the Bonehead Club. In it Tiger Dan, Dr. Ames, Doc Levi, Joe Murch and the cafes flourish and the bright lights shine.

The artist's conception of the street becomes still more complex. He begins to feel something of the soul of it, to listen to its music, to catch intermittently the deep sounding of its three great bass notes, and to detect the traffic of its ladder to heaven. The street is not merely asphalt and stone and people. William Blake,

the poet-artist, vehemently denied that the sunrise was to him the apparent appearance in the east of a material ball of fire and light. "No, no," he said, "I see a multitude of the heavenly host shouting, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!'"

Something spiritual and profound exudes from the pavement of a well trodden street and escapes into the air. One breathes in the spirit of the street and knows it not. What millions of complex influences are poured every twenty-four hours into its vital air!

I was sent late one afternoon to interview a man who, from shrewd foresight of market conditions, had just added to his wealth the sum of \$340,000. In the language of the street he had "made" it. I went down into one of the older business blocks where a janitor was clearing up the debris of the day. On an upper floor another janitor, whistling, was engaged in similar work.

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The man for whom I was searching sat in his chair with his feet on the windowsill looking out on Fourth Street, but not seeing it. Dejection sat by his side. He had \$340,000 more added to his pile, \$340,000 all his own, made by a turn of the wrist of his mind. The same week had enriched me as well, for I was "making" \$15 and was grateful for the chance. I discovered that I was the wealthier of the two.

At another time I was sent to ask a "prominent citizen" certain questions about his lamentable financial failure. The cub reporter, like the fireman and the policeman, has to go where he is sent. Many are the times when I would gladly have exchanged places with either. Kindly remember, to the cub reporter's credit, that it is another gentleman who is sending him where he would not, and where you wonder at him for going. But he goes, for the cub reporter is mortal. I went into this man's office

and found, sitting at his desk, a hard-faced, white moustached, iron haired man of about seventy years who had every appearance of having fought with beasts at Ephesus. I stammered an apology for what seemed like an impertinent intrusion at such a time. A bit of cynical amusement began to creep in around the old man's eyes and run down and out on his nose. The cub reporter, this year's graduate from some college, was sympathizing with him! I saw the point, asked the questions I must and backed away. The cynical smile still played around his nose as I left. It taught me much that I might not otherwise have known, but it was in a hard school.

I was standing on a corner of Fourth Street and First avenue south rather late in a summer evening of 1886, leaning against the area-way railing on the *Journal* corner of the old *Tribune* building—and lonesome. I was thinking so intently

about something of no importance that I barely noticed a rather trim little girl who walked past the corner once or twice and glanced in its direction. In a few moments she passed it again and this time she turned around and spoke:

"It's a mean world!"

"Well," I replied, rather taken aback, "it has its outs."

She hesitated a moment and then continued:

"If you haven't anything else to do, what's the matter with coming up to my room?"

It was the first time that I had been accosted in this manner on Fourth Street and I hastened to reply in the spirit if not with the exact words of Dr. Samuel Johnson on a similar occasion:

"No, no, my girl; it won't do."

On a late-in-November night in 1889, memorable forever, I saw the first slender, swaying column of flame rising perpendicularly like a great

red streamer from the western end of the old *Tribune* building, now the *Phoenix*, and waving itself out into nothing high in the darkness above the great structure. Old friends and fellow workers are crowding out of the windows, picking their perilous ways cautiously around the narrow cornice still in place on the seventh floor of the present *Phoenix* building. I see them falling from the fire escape ladder on the alley side of the building, Milton Pickett coming down as if swimming on his back, landing heavily on the pavement of the alley between the building and the present bank. I hear the cries of terror and of hurry, and sounds of men swearing and crying!

Yes, a photograph of the street misses much that is clearly there. The annals and the life histories of the pioneers and transients who walked it and helped to make it what it is do not contain it. All the trivial happenings one can gather from the

waste paper basket of his memories, disappointing the judicious who are looking for wisdom or for information and discovering their husks, do not carry the whole spirit of the history of the street, though I sometimes think that they come nearer to it than do the more pretentious histories.

With Tennyson's "mystic," angels had talked and "showed him thrones." The Spirits of Fourth Street Past, Present, and To Come have spoken to me things not to be lightly uttered nor quickly forgotten. Yet not these things, but rather the "trivial fond records" are what I wish to place upon paper before walking gladly up the street for the last time and turning the familiar corner of Hennepin avenue to—Heaven.

II

THE lights of the Fourth Street that I first knew are now extinguished and more garish ones have taken their places. But I know where they still shine and in their unforgotten and unforgettable light I see old faces and hear glad voices. Charlie Harris, Pat Miles, Igoe, Ted Varnum, Lyman Morey, Fred Haven, Andy Henderson, Clarence Miner, Bob Park, Billings, known as Williamings, Fred Olds, Billy Pearson, Ed Atterbury, Will Wright, Willard Dillman, "Fannie" Francis, George Spear, Col. C. Watt Brandon, Tommy Thurlby, Jake Werner, Eddie Barnes, Ed Henderson, Frank Wiltburger, Leroy Robinson, Abbott Blunt, Stiles Jones, Frank Wing, Charles "Bart," H. C. Chapin, Larry Ho Hodgson, Cap. Van Winkle,

John Tallman, Colonel Haskell, George Cavan, "Mr. Johnson" of the *Times*, A. S. Capehart, Horace Hudson, E B Smith (without the periods, please, he was named E B and nothing else), Doc Bowman, J. S. Van Antwerp, James Gray, Percy Benson, Pat Gibbons, Old Bill Webster, Billy O'Brien and Arthur Warnock (who together originated the Nine Spot Club), Charlie Tuller, Ed Bromley, George Luxton, Charlie Somerby, J. H. Barton, Ray Marshall, Milton Pickett, Frank Frost, Colonels Torrey and Pollock, Fatty Trestrail, D. G. Congdon, Billee Brownlee, Adolph Edsten, Charles Vicious Barton, Schindler, Percy Weadon of the variegated tie, dear old Mart Williams, "Jonesey," J. Newton Nind, Smith Hall, W. W. Rowell, Eddie Brooks, Joe Mannix, Ladendorf, Herb Conner, Otis Colburn, Bob Strong, Luther Little, Lieutenant Ward, Frank Carleton, The Rev. G. L. Morrill, M. O.

Nelson, W. E. Davis, "The Bishop of "Wall Street," Ernest C. Pratt, "Chamb.," Willie Frisbie, Bill Barbour, John G. Neihardt, E. G. Erickson, W. H. Ronald, J. C. Cockburn, Fred Hunt, Doc Storrs, Earl May, Jerry Kennedy, Harry Holcomb, Tom Lees, Ike Brokaw, W. W. Williams, W. C. Hartshorn, Clint Snow, George Helm, Billy Houk, Percy Atkinson, A. C. Sutter, and a hundred other cheerful young bucks, each of whom deserves a volume, flash out upon the screen again. And there is a Great Unknown!

I was assured by Charlie Harris, the brightest and best of the sons of the Fourth Street morning of 1885, when he took me under his tutelage and told me all of the past and present glories of the street, that there was a Great Unknown in its history, a genius who had written an immortal song. Several years before this time, he had gone to New York to secure its publication. The story

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came back that he was in a hospital there. Charlie Harris did not know what became of him, or whether he lived or died. His name? Charlie Harris could not remember it. But he could remember parts of the song. He taught me both music and words. It took some time, but I finally secured a hold on them and, in my inner ear, their waves dance and sing, even unto this day:

*'Twas down by the meadow,
The meadow whose green
And tall waving grasses
Are bright with the sheen
And full of the motion
And roll of the ocean,
Where waves dance in sunlight
With shadows between.*

I have appealed to many of the old authorities on the street, from S. M. Williams to R. F. Jones, but all in vain. What was the name of the writer of the song? Was the song ever published? Was it ever sung



**FOURTH STREET LOOKING WEST FROM
SECOND AVENUE SOUTH**

here? No one can tell me. So Fourth Street has its legend. At times I have thought that Charlie Harris, who was an erratic genius and capable of it, wrote it himself and tried it on the innocent, untutored and simple mind of the cub reporter. Yet this theory would destroy the legend of the Unknown Genius of Fourth Street—and so I reject it.

Lyman Morey wandered in from Somewhere in America and became one of the numerous telegraph editors of the *Journal* in the '80's. (He should not be confused with Comrade Morey who is still with the street.) He wore a careless air, was full of good cheer, and his spectacles cast a Pickwickian glow along the thoroughfare by night. The gloom that was over him when he was out of funds was instantly dissipated by the loan of a half dollar. The change in his appearance wrought by this simple financial transaction was

worth the price. Working by his side, I grew to love him. But one day he left the paper and in later years we heard that he was dead.

Nicolay Grevstad roamed the high editorial spaces and I regarded his activities with awe. Not so Lyman Morey, who had discovered a sensitive spot in his armor. Mr. Morey announced in loud tones that, on Mr. Grevstad's native heath, the people wore wooden shoes. Mr. Grevstad was sensibly shocked. He took time from his work, sat down and showed Mr. Morey that he was entirely mistaken. His city was in reality the Paris of the North. Wooden shoes were unknown there. Lyman listened gravely, but at the conclusion of the lecture he again stated his firm conviction in the wooden shoe status of Mr. Grevstad's former friends and compatriots. So near to violence did the discussion come, that we were obliged to call Lyman off.

Hartley Davis was the paper's

glass of fashion. Even at that time he carried a "stick" hooked over his arm jauntily. I looked upon him with envy, but could not rise to it. Hartley had the early tragic style. He opened his story of a notable restaurant murder with the celebrated line,

"Blood on the pie!"

It caused him much trouble. Then he went to New York and the street saw him no more.

In the moving pictures of the street, one of the figures that flashes most insistently upon the curtain is that of Smith Hall,¹ with copy in hand, running like a deer from the Minneapolis offices of the *St. Paul Globe*, very early in the morning, to catch the last train for the capitol city. Mr. Hall was burning bright

¹ While this book was on its way through the press occurred the death of the generous, big-hearted, and sympathetic Smith Hall. To many persons, and especially to the "Old Guard" of whom he loved to speak, Fourth Street will never again be quite the same.

with the terrestrial fire, and so rapid was his passage that Fourth Street smoked. We looked at one another.

"There goes Smith with 'thirty.' It is time we were in bed."

So much of the past (my past) does that sturdy figure represent, that I cannot see it walking the stones of Fourth Street today without Rossettian emotion:

*The changing guests, each in a different mood,
Sit by the Fourth Street tables and arise;
And every soul among them, gay or wise,
Resembles Regan's, set with changing food.
Smithius, sometimes on seeing thee I brood
With all the strength that in my vision lies
On those days distant and those long shut eyes
That used to find old Fourth Street to the good.*



SMITH HALL

FOURTH STREET 43

As I watch thee with Taurus Dur-
ham strive,
Scattering the leaf from floor to
window sill,
Thy fat form gives my soul a sud-
den thrill!
I bless kind heaven that we are still
alive
Treading the stones of Fourth
Street, seeing still
The dim old days of Eighteen Eighty
Five.

I induced the late James Gray to go as far away as Tenth street, to a delicate little tearoom for luncheon. There the jaded palate might obtain a bit of lettuce with a French dressing, a lacework sandwich, a passing sigh of meat and the aroma of coffee in eggshell china. Mr. Gray humorously surveyed the "dinner" while I delightedly awaited his verdict:

"I would like to see Smith Hall inhale this!"

The nub of the witticism needs explication. Smith, one of the heavy-

weights of the fourth estate, demanded his yard of beefsteak and accompaniments in proportion. We dwelt joyously on the picture of Smith Hall squared for action before the tearoom dinner. The idea dawned upon us almost simultaneously, flooding all the day with light. Why not induce Smith to dine with us here and listen to his stifled cries. We discussed the matter in every phase and found it practicable. We spoke to the woman in charge telling her that, in case we brought in a thickset, good looking individual with a cigaret, we would be forever obliged to her if she would see that the amount of food served were decreased about a quarter. We would pay her double for the service. It required some work on the part of Mr. Gray to clear up the lingering doubts in her mind, but she finally comprehended the crime and assented thereto.

For days we gloated over the men-

tal picture of Smith's detection of the meal, of his stertorous scorn and of the melting lines on his face as the significance of the situation dawned upon him. Days fled away, nights broke into dawns, and still the affair was postponed. In fact it did not occur. But it should have been a part of Fourth Street history. I have no doubt that, as the shunned raconteur of the street of 1935, I shall be telling it as fact and describing our Homeric laughter.

It was Smith Hall who brought from the far West the recipe for a new variety of hash later known as the Smith Hall hash. He tended and watered his plant at Regan's restaurant where it took sturdy root and flourished. An S. H. H. with poached egg furnished many a dinner for lagging genius along Fourth Street in the eighties. All that I recall of this epicurean dish is that it was necessary to strain it through a

coarse sieve on its way to ultimate perfection. Mr. Hall was particular about this feature.

Someone told me when "Jim" was running for governor of the state of Minnesota, that "Gray couldn't see old friends on the street." It was clear enough that the speaker had "never known Jim." Mr. Gray was a sick man for years before he died so suddenly in his chair at Washington and he was sometimes preoccupied in his manner. But he rose above his ailments as a rule and few even among his friends knew of their extent and severity. He was popular with those who really knew him, invariably, and for this reason he was more or less disturbed in his daily work by the visits to his office of the time-wasters and "reconteurs" who came in to "tell the latest one to Jim." Occupying the same room with him for a stretch of years that I love to remember, I was a witness of his popularity and I grew to love him.

Among the visitors at this office was one who finally attained to the name and fame of the Infinite Raconteur. Had there been nothing to do in the office of a daily newspaper, the visits of this man would have been just splendid. The brilliancy of his anecdote, the charm of his narration, the depth and mellowness of his philosophy were undoubted. Insensibly we were withdrawn from the work of the day and gathered to listen, wonder, and enjoy. In the genial flow, he one day dropped the hint that the greatest of his personal fears was that of becoming a bore, a person whom he detested.

After the Raconteur left the room, we recurred to this remark.

"It is plain to see," said the ex-mayor, "that he is the victim of an uneasy conscience in the matter. It would be a pretty good game to work with him along those lines."

Sometimes when I stand at the window of the old Room over the

Gate and look out on that small section of Fourth Street that it frames, I smile all by myself again to think of the methods we concerted, and actually took, to bring to naught the work of this raconteur. We studied out the plan of campaign, took time to perfect the details and watched and waited.

The day came. The Infinite Raconteur, when the time was ripe for his destruction, appeared in the passageway of the office. He was interrupted along the way by friendly hails, but it was evident that his eye was on our still harbor. While the former mayor made a hurried and dramatic exit, timed so as to be seen, I deliberately crawled under the roller-top desk. On came the Raconteur bubbling with cheerful laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! Well, well! Is it possible that I am developing the qualities of the bore? I see everybody scuttle. Ha, ha!"

I appeared shamefacedly from un-

der the desk, murmuring something about dropping a pencil, and invited him to have a chair while I hunted up the former mayor. I was unable to find that gentleman. He had vanished. And by an oversight I neglected to return. So that at the very opening of the campaign we secured a notable hit. The Raconteur was compelled to retire "with all his music in him."

From that day on, as if he suspected our design, it became a contest of wits. The Infinite Raconteur had met with infinite resistance, and the celestial sparks flew from the wheels of mind. Did he find us at anchor? The office boy, nearby friends, or the telephone girl had calls for us from other sections of the building. We went with apparent reluctance to these calls of duty, returned and went again, often disappearing permanently.

It wore the Infinite Raconteur out. His visits dribbled off and practically

ceased. The infinite resistance had overcome the infinite flow. When we gave in a little out of pity, his cheerful palaver was found to have been broken and disorganized. He looked at us, stammered, and fled.

And we dared not tell him the joke, if joke it was, because it had all become so serious. That is one of the troubles with humor. When it passes a certain invisible mental boundary, it becomes serious, possibly tragical.

III

WHEN I think of "Doc" Bowman, who was Roland G. Bowman, cartoonist, artist, poet, and friend — but I try not to think about him very much.

The Doctor has been missing now for more than a decade. Not a stone in the street but knew his tread. His passage was always a slow one. Hands were extended to him from every side and the smiling faces that greeted him filled me with the bitterest envy. In friendliness and good-fellowship he flourished like a watered garden. Deprived of them in places where he expected them, he willed to die.

The Doctor was a born cartoonist, but he longed to be a poet. We are always reaching ahead to the things we are not yet quite equal to. Dur-



R. C. BOWMAN

ing a day's work he would sometimes send across the intervening space an office boy with a poem, asking in penciled note on the margin, "How is it?" I wish now that I had been a

better liar. When I refer to one of the best of these efforts, I see that the copy paper on which it is written in pencil is already turning yellow with age. It runs in this way:

*Love thoughts are the flowers growing
In the garden of our living.
Happiness is in the knowing
That the fragrance of a flower
Doubles ever in the giving.
Love is God Almighty's power!
Love and give and live the hour.*

We shared one big, brief dream that never came true. We hurried up Fourth Street to get into the quieter places where we might gloat over it. We were to write the Book of Boys par excellence. We granted that "Tom Sawyer" was great and that T. B. Aldrich's "Story of a Bad Boy" set a pace that was difficult, but we had in mind a boys' book that no boy, having once seen it, could exist without. But nothing came of it.



"WE HURRIED UP FOURTH STREET"

It was while walking home from Fourth Street on the close of the office day, that the Doctor outlined a theory upon which he had been working, namely, that the Christian Scientists were more than half right.

"Now look here," said the Doctor argumentatively, "your mind is full of malice, isn't it?"

"Yes," I assented, "and so is yours; full of malice, viciousness, and verminiferous littleness."

"Yes," the Doctor agreed, "that is true. Now I don't believe in trying to demonstrate over thunder and lightning, or against mule kicks, but why wouldn't it be a pretty good job for us to get this malice out of our minds? Isn't it the pewee who is full of malice and who is always 'knocking' somebody or something? Why shouldn't we be among those great, big, broad, charitable, good-natured, fat men whom everybody likes? All we've got to do is to get the other stuff out of our minds. What do you say?"

"All right," I replied, "let's."

So from that time on for some months we checked up on each other. Whenever one of us showed malice or bitterness against anybody or anything, the other pointed out to him the long way he had to go before attaining anything like the perfected consciousness. So far, finally, did we carry this excellent game, that we threw away our tobacco in the stern

determination more perfectly to evangelize the personal self. It was in connection with this great heroism that the Doctor achieved a notable victory, one over which we marveled and rejoiced. The throwing off of this filthy bit of Americanism, namely the tobacco habit, occurred during the summer. One frosty morning early in the fall the Doctor appeared, on his way to work, with the light of a great conquest over self shining in his eye. He was bubbling over with it.

"I don't know anything about you," he said enthusiastically, "but I know that I am arriving."

"How so?"

"Well, coming out of the house this morning right after breakfast, as I was putting on my fall overcoat, I carelessly put one hand in a pocket and brought up a plug of perfectly good tobacco, juicy and splendid, left over from last spring!"

"My heavens! Did you take a bite out of it?"

"No," replied the Doctor, fairly bursting with spiritual pride, "I threw it as far as I could!"

Here was glorious proof of the fine advance we had made in one short summer.

Dear old Doc! He threw out some sturdy branches along Fourth Street and the buds were showing all over him. I feel that he has burst into bloom along some other street.

IV

“REGAN’S!” The name is deeply cut into the annals of the street. Fourth Street and Youth walked hand in hand and dined at Regan’s. The restaurant was at one time on Nicollet avenue but it was near the essential street and it finally moved over. It lacked something, perhaps, of being Sherry’s, but we knew that the proprietors served no article of food which they themselves were not willing to eat. They gave their customers a square deal and every man his money’s worth. In this humble place, Fourth Street history was made. Hundreds of graduates of the University of Minnesota, or of some neighboring business college, return to Fourth Street today and look in vain and possibly with dimming eyes for Regan’s. There,

while working their way, they obtained their "three squares" a day for months at a time, "waiting on table," or otherwise making themselves useful.

"Regan's!" How many breakfasts of "brickbats and coffee" with a doughnut on the side I ate at Regan's, only the books of the recording angel will show. What mighty questions and weighty problems we settled here daily, found them unsettled again on the next day and again took them up for discussion! The closing of the doors of the old place occurred on February the 28th, 1914:

*My pen trails listless at its theme,
I cannot do my stunt,
The life of the noon hour has fled
With Regan's Restaurant.*

*I know that it is vain to grieve,
Mortalia omnia sunt,
Yet that itself adds to the grief
For this lost restaurant.*

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*"A thousand others?" To be sure!
And yet I simply can't
Regard them in the light I once
Held Regan's Restaurant.*

*I feel in nineteen twenty-three
My bosom still will pant
For Dr. Jordan, Dillman, Hall,
In Regan's Restaurant.*

*We settled in that brief half hour
Great questions, though I grant
That they came up again next day
In Regan's Restaurant.*

*I hope some day to enter heaven
Yes, when I join the chant,
I know one wandering eye will look
For Regan's Restaurant.*

V

THE Eternity Club was an impromptu affair entirely. No one organized and no one disrupted it. There were no dues and no penalties and it neither rented rooms nor hired halls. It met in a little room in the back of Sheik's restaurant and gathered into its broad and catholic fold Fourth Street's amateur philosophers, poets, sociologists, musicians, and a medical student or two with thirsts literary and otherwise. A tailor called "Jack," who had a taste for the higher life, gave the club its title. After listening to our discussion one late Saturday night in manifest uneasiness of person and of spirit, he noted, as he arose from his chair, that "you fellows are distant a whole eternity from the things of this earth." And with that hard-headed

judgment he went his way and the club saw him no more. By unanimous outcry we at once adopted the name which he, like the Indian, left behind him as he vanished. We became the Eternity Club.

Every Saturday night from nine to twelve of the clock, some one of no importance along Fourth Street would wander into the little back room, take a book from his pocket and sit down to read. An eye would soon appear around the corner of the partition and run over the reader. If all were well, the eye would then take on a few other important features and develop itself finally into a full member of the club. Others drifted in and the talk moved about pleasantly and found new starting points.

The poets gave us considerable trouble. Sometimes they read their output when the air was congenial. There were two schools of poetic endeavor represented in the eighties.

The James Whitcomb Riley followers were coming into prominence and there were "the cryptic poets," the advance couriers of the *vers libre* folk of today. It was difficult to understand them. One night a poet of the Riley class announced that he had gone over to the cryptic school and had written a trilogy, I think it was, called "The Dream of Tormentuous." All that I recall, at this late day, is the first movement. It ran like this:

I

*Man is a wandering dream
Catapulted hence
Like a tureen;
"Excellent! Excellent!"
Saith the stone fence.*

II

*Man is a fly-by-night
Shot out of dusk
Like a dogbite;
All that's not supreme sees
Naught but the husk.*

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III

*Should we but ask the sphinx
 "Whither is whence?"
That lady merely blinks,
Far as she really sees
 All is High Fence.*

IV

*Out-Sudermanning Ibsen's worst,
 Destiny's hoot,
Really you're quite accurst,
That is the horologe!
 Man gets the boot.*

V

*Thither, and thence, and what,
Corruscates bleak
 Out of the rut;
Phantasms' phantasmagoria
 Gibber and strut.*

VI

*Poison and dagger's scour!
 Apple and plum!
A! ha! What ho?
Three trillion miles an hour!
 That's going some!*

VII

*So man's a wandering dream
Catapulted hence
Like a tureen.
"Excellent! Excellent!"
Saith the Stone Fence.*

It was an effort that lost me the friendship of one of the prominent exponents of the cryptic school of poetry in the Eternity Club. I tried to live it down with him, but he was never quite the same.

Speaking of the club reminds me that "drinks" must change and go out of date as well as streets. Who now along Fourth Street calls for a "Silver Fizz," or for a "Horse's Collar"? What would the barkeeper say today should a customer ask for a "Mamie Taylor"?

We thought we were sad dogs. But we weren't, at all. And I am sure now that God often smiled at us behind his hand.

Stearn & Van Winkle's bar was

then silk-lined with judges, doctors, lawyers, editors, statesmen, actors, business men, and "notables" of every kind. They are no longer seen in similar places—at least in such droves—or if they do enter them they first look cautiously up and down the street. Sentiment along Fourth Street has changed.

But one should not condemn unreservedly. To the custom of free and unlimited coinage of drinks along Fourth Street of the latter eighties I owed a position of which I was grievously in need. A local poet, filling the high place of proofreader, had been frequently warned that his personal liberty interfered with his value to the institution. I was told to be on hand on the following Saturday night. If the occupant of the position appeared in a state of personal freedom that interfered with his duties, I was to have the consequent opening in the proofroom. I hated to take his place, but dire necessity

made me hold my personal wishes in reserve.

The poet appeared, obviously intoxicated, but eloquent in denial. I listened anxiously to the controversy from the wings.

"Very well," said the head of the proofroom, "if you have not been drinking, let's hear you say 'Swift's Specific.'"

The poet took a firm grip on himself and unloosened this:

"S-spiff's S-s-swifficate."

Noticing from the expression on the faces of the proofroom that he had fallen short of perfection, he added:

"No, no, hold on! Once more! S-s-swiff's" — the light of confidence illumined his features. He felt that he was on safe ground — "S-s-swiff's Sp-p-pifficate."

He was discharged and I secured the place.

"Th' new kind," as Mr. Dooley said of a world without alcohol, and

the observation is true of Fourth Street, "may be bettther; but it'll be diff'rent, an' th' wurruld will be a sadder an' a safer wurruld to live in."

Into the Eternity Club one evening Albert Dollenmeyer wandered in the spirit and power of Henry George. Like the people who sat in darkness, Dol had seen a great light. He explained to us in detail how the land speculator squatted like a great monstrous toad in the path of the people's pursuit of happiness, home, heaven, and economic freedom. I took the book home and read it steadily for two or three months and new glories began to shine out along Fourth Street. But some of us annoyed the enlightened along one line of light by wondering just why we should stop with the destruction of the land speculator. Here were the people and here were their desire and their right to eat. And here was food. Why should the food speculator squat like another great toad

between the people and their eating and make his profit, great or small as the chance offered, out of their necessity? Here again were the people, and here was their necessity of transporting freight and themselves across the country and through the cities. Why should the profit-makers and speculators live on and extract dividends out of these simple or complex necessities? The Eternity Club raged and boiled.

The club divided roughly into two factions, perhaps three. There were some who came to the conclusion that the business of the people should be done for the use and benefit of all the people, and not partly for the benefit of the people and partly for the profit of the few. There were others who did not wish to shut the door of opportunity on themselves. We might be the capitalists of the future and extract our little profits. With such changes in our economic system might not we, our precious

selves, the possible Newspaper Magnates, Merchant Princes, Empire Builders, Captains of Industry, Wheat Kings, Egg Kings of the future, become superfluous? The very newspapers would be run by the government. (Laughter.) It would become a world of postoffice clerks!

A third faction of the club cared nothing either way. It was enjoying life too much to be interested.

The club did not settle the question, nor was it as a rule greatly disturbed by questions of moral right or economic law. But I know that a few half concluded that some joyous day, whether we lived to see it or not, the political democracy of the nation might be supplemented by as much industrial democracy as there was political democracy; that collective ownership of the means of production and distribution, in the interest of the whole people, might come about. And, best of all, no mad-

dened mob, armed and full of fury, need sweep relentless down Fourth Street, trampling the soldiery under foot, tipping over the bronze statues of R. F. Jones and Joseph Chapman and melting them down for bullets, tearing up the street car tracks and building huge barriers across Nicollet and Hennepin. The people could vote into effect any economic system. Why shoot and kill, and muss Fourth Street all up, when it was so much easier to vote in the millenium? So I gave up looking for any revolutionary activity along Fourth Street.

Thanks to the Eternity Club, Fourth Street for me has never become entirely commercialized. It still has its philosophers, poets, and dreamers. The Eternity Club was their first gathering place of which I have knowledge. We ranged from Kant and Schopenhauer down to John Fiske and we passed easily from Henry George to George Moore who

was just appearing above our horizon. A well thumbed copy of "Mike Fletcher" went the rounds. We read at anything anybody offered, smoked to excess, and talked of what the soul of the fully developed man might become. But we never did anything. Sometimes I find myself longing for another session of the Eternity Club. But it cannot be. Youth and Fourth Street are older. Perhaps they know more, but I doubt if they are wiser for their years.

For this is the real tragedy of Fourth Street, and the confusion of all Eternity Clubs forever, that the boys of the high dreams grow older and vote the republican ticket. They get a little money, invest it, and begin to feed at the tables from which they once turned in distaste. They find that the "successful business men" do not gather around and admire the young man who is not of their kind. They smile pityingly and they see that he does not advance in

the business world until he has changed his ideas. Then he becomes "safe."

These young men discover that economic mal-adjustments are kept up, partly by custom, partly by someone's self interest. There are vested rights in wrong-doing and in inefficiency. Would they get their shoulders under and lift? They are lifting against millions of tons of dead weight. The change in their dreams comes slowly. The corruption is spread over decades and quarter centuries. Had they guessed it, the conviction would have broken young hearts. Custom, conservatism, and age cushion their fall.

But the land is rising a little higher with the passing decades. The tide ebbs and the tide flows, but the shore line is rising.

I have always sympathized with the man who, after an evening at poker with "friends," went home with tobacco stains on his shirt front.

"But," protested his wife, "can't you turn your head to one side to ex-pectorate?"

"Not when I play with that gang."

Gloss over the facts as we may, Fourth Street in 1885 was something of a mining camp. Gambling was a recognized business. I discovered numerous games underway in the second stories. Having the usual youthful curiosity, I sat into a game that required a capital of one dollar. It was, I think, called "draw." And it drew a number of dollars out of me before I discovered something, namely, that I was in business with men who were much sharper, shrewder, and better all-around business men than I could ever hope to be. They were there neither for health nor for recreation. Having once secured a hold on this pregnant fact, I withdrew, perfectly satisfied, and never went back. I had learned all that the game could teach me.

After living in a casual way along

Fourth Street for some years, I noticed that certain of my friends were "getting ahead." They were going into business of various kinds and, instead of working for other people, they had other people working for them. Many of them have become successful men and prominent citizens. One of my best friends went out one afternoon and borrowed a million dollars that he needed. I respect this ability. Doubtless those of us who have failed in this respect have weakness somewhere. John Rockefeller has told us that "the failures that a man makes in his life are due to some defect, some weakness of body, mind, character, will, or temperament."

Walking Fourth Street and considering "business," Big Business and Little Business, I came early to the conclusion that I could not "play with that gang." Just as I could not play with the boys who gambled, so I found I was not shrewd enough,

nor did I begin to have the brain, nor the heart, to play with the business boys.

And I find, reviewing the thirty years along the street, that the majority of men are not shrewd enough for its most serious game.

In a family of ten brothers, is the fact that three of the brothers were born shrewder than the others a good and sufficient reason why the three shrewd ones should have exclusive use of the automobile while the eight others walk? Should not this shrewdness be a family asset rather than a personal asset? Is not this wonderful ability of humanity's shrewd ones a human asset? Should it not be conscripted in a general family "preparedness"? These are merely questions. I don't claim to know the answers.

A thousand years is a long time. Much may happen yet along Fourth Street.

But there were other associations

which, while not of Fourth Street were, nevertheless, conceived and carried out in the spirit of the street. The Flubdub Club met in the restaurant on Hennepin avenue owned by the late Ed A. Taylor, who was chosen Eminent Flubdub and who frequently presided from out the depths of as fundamental whiskers as ever teased a Fourth Street zephyr. Of this club I have but hearsay knowledge. Ted Varnum was prominent in it, as was James Gray. Other choice spirits such as Mullaney, Wetleson, Harry Black, and E. J. Rose, then known as "Oscar the Tailor," gathered about its tables.

The Flubdubs decided that a diamond was a correct expression of their feelings for Harry Black when he left the city for St. Paul. As the time was short and as he was prominent in the suggestion, Oscar the Tailor was instructed by unanimous vote to select and purchase the stone and to look to the club for reimburse-

ment. This was carried out per schedule. Mr. Rose, still looking to the club for reimbursement, finally left the city and became immensely wealthy elsewhere. Reports began to return and to circulate in Flubdub circles of his having secured wealth far beyond the dreams of Flubdud avarice. These reports were true. Such things happen along Fourth Street. But no matter where Mr. Rose resides, nor how much wealth he has obtained, it may be stated without fear of successful contradiction that he is still, per instructions, looking to the Flubdub Club for reimbursement for the Harry Black diamond.

The Solid Ivory, or Bonehead Club, is a latter day development of the spontaneous Eternity Club idea. It has been made up of a number of ivory headed, iron minded, pertinacious irreconcilables, not at all satisfied to keep things stationary and as they are, and forever hurrying and

spurring on the lagging world to the best of their little ability and lack of prominence in its affairs. The club needs the mellowing that time alone can give.

Then came the Attic Club, an association of artists under the roof of the old *Times* building on Fourth Street just below Marquette. They made use of a skylight leading up and out—a skylight that must have been used by the photographers of the *Times* while it was temporizing and pushing off the inevitable. Theodore Keene is credited with having discovered this window in heaven and with building the club around or under it. The Attic Club has now removed to Lake Street and is helping to put another great arterial thoroughfare on the map.

VI

WHEN we spoke of "the editor" along Fourth Street in the old days, we had in mind such figures as Horace Greeley and Thurlow Weed. Along this street have walked George K. Shaw, John Blanchard, George D. Bowman, W. A. Croffut, Alden J. Blethen, Albert Shaw, John S. McLain, John T. Gilman, David Blakeley, George C. Cochrane, Thomas S. King, F. A. Carle, and General A. B. Nettleton. Many others did good work but did not attain to the scroll of even local fame.

I searched the office "morgue" one day for the biography of an old Fourth Street editor who was at the point of death. He had been grinding at the old mill for over fifty years and the supply of grist was as great as ever, when, one evening, he was interrupted by the idea of death.

In his own day he had written a thousand obituaries of prominent citizens and statesmen—but this one was different. It was his own obituary that now came to his attention and he went home too sick to think of visiting the office library to throw it together before leaving. He knew that it was in there, somewhere, but this time some one else must do the work and draw the great lessons from his little life.

Have you ever considered the work of the old editor who has been at the desk since the reconstruction period in the nation's history, feeding the editorial pig into the hopper and forever turning out the sausage of public opinion for a careless world? Long before you were engaged in the adventure of being born, he was at the desk, in good weather and in bad, through peace and war, in the face of flood, fire, and disaster, summing it up, telling about it, and drawing the proper lessons therefrom.

While your father and mother were at school, the day they met, when they were being married, at the hour when you were born, when you were married and O so happy, this old editor was at the desk, doing his daily stint, sometimes easily, sometimes with groanings that might not be uttered. For he, like the world, had his troubles. Many times he had settled the problems of statecraft, of economics, of public ownership, of free silver, of the Philippines and of the local Park Board, but there were things in his own life that could not be tossed, like the foreign policy of the United States, from the end of a lead pencil. His child was sick and he had to be awake through the night — and then mold a little public opinion and settle a few foreign policies during the day. Possibly he was sick himself or more likely he was sick at heart at the apparent futility of it all, but he went on writing his confident and omniscient editorials.

Sometimes the men who owned the paper came around and raised terrible outcry. They had been frightened by something he had written. There was discussion "of the policy of the paper." After that, he conformed to their ideas somewhat, if they had ideas, but he was obstinate. There was talk among the owners of "letting him out," but on the whole he was too valuable. He was an encyclopedia of information and of local and general knowledge.

And I was assigned to secure his obituary from the office morgue, or from the files, and to put it into shape for "about two sticksful." I was looking up this record when the editorial rooms called on the 'phone and said:

"Never mind about the Old Man! He's back at work again this morning!"

VII

TWO Old Romans who gave infinite entertainment, annoyance, and instruction walked the street in the latter eighties or early nineties. Professor Hart, the Sawdust Pie-man, and in his propaganda he included bread and cake as well, frequented the municipal forum called the W.C.T.U. Coffee House, later the Russell. He had induced this excellent institution to add to its bill of fare the products of the kitchen he so sternly advocated for the salvation and health of Fourth Street. His improved pie was fabricated from the entire apple—peeling, core, stem, and, unless I am mistaken, wormhole as well. The crust was made from whole wheat flour, including the bran and a few splinters of barrel. It was a raucous, saw-

dusty, iron-filing pie of mottled and cementy appearance, but it obtained advocates and ultimate consumers in no mean numbers.

This coarseness in food was not merely a fad with the Sawdust Pie-man. It was a religion. Some of us who ate at the Coffee House gnashed on him and on his theories with our teeth, but he was undisturbed by our thoughtless clamor. With his cane under his arm he walked the reaches of Fourth Street, certain of the impending advent of the new day when the people would eat a better, namely a coarser, food and so the new race would be evolved. Night and day, rain and shine, summer and winter, he annoyed the restaurants, irritated the flour mill district, and disturbed the peace of Fourth Street with unceasing propaganda. It must be splendid to have a great idea and to hold it firmly.

Old Roman No. 2 found in Lawrence Gronlund's "Coöperative Com-

monwealth" the final philosophy for an immature and misguided Fourth Street. He had read and studied this particular book for years unnumbered, until its pages were worn nearly to rags. Every leaf had its penciled mark or carried its scribbled comment and reference. It struck out the odor of stale tobacco smoke and of long past dinners, where it had reposed, propped wide open, beside the Old Roman's plate as he ate, studied, and thought. I asked him one day, intending a compliment, to will me this book when he died. He took the request seriously and refused it. He could not think of the precious volume in the possession of another. I know, if he had real friends about him at the last, that the volume was buried with him. He was an elderly man thirty years ago and it is hardly possible that he has survived to this late day. But he had the great happiness in his age of having the Vision still clear

and distinct. He knew that poor, struggling humanity was all right and that it was on the way. He was always looking, through the long night, on the edges and bordering lights of the city of economic and social peace. That he died in this light, I have no manner of doubt.

I love these men—and women—of one great and comprehending Idea. Fourth Street has seen them. They are honest and earnest and they are not doing and thinking for “profits.” The world never gives up anything valuable, like dividends, to them, rarely gives them even casual attention. It smiles and passes on down the street to the Chamber of Commerce. But I have an idea that they jolt it a little, notwithstanding. They pour into its thought atmosphere their intense concentration upon an idea and somebody, somewhere, catches something of it.

At the Russell Coffee House, also, I was thrown in with a tall, thought-

ful, comfortable individual whose name and occupation I did not know. He was a regular and steady boarder and together, at the tables, we settled many a great and troublesome question. He was the freest person I ever saw. One might almost have called him "untrammelled." He had a room within easy walking distance and he drifted about Fourth Street, at Regan's or at the Russell, in a carefree and wholesouled way that won my attention and respect. He was the last person on the street whom I should have selected as one to whom the can might be tied.

But this independent, glad life was interrupted by the idea of matrimony. How he fell I never knew. Possibly, in a careless moment, loneliness set in. Possibly the racial thought had entered unguarded gates. Peradventure a stronger and more determined personality had decided something for him. We may

not know. But we do know that on a fatal day he appeared at the Russell, married! He was initiating her, so he vainly thought, into the freedom and carefree life of Fourth Street. There together they would wander free. Thus he must have reasoned.

That she was femininely uneasy at this unwonted freedom, an outsider might plainly see by her manner and expression. She made the best of it for a few days while she was getting her bearings, but it became increasingly evident to us that she was preparing to withdraw her capture from the old haunts and water-holes. And so he fell away from among us and became merely a MARRIED MAN. I saw him now and again, but he had aged perceptibly. There was a stoop to his shoulder and his hair was an iron gray. Like some splendid wild thing of the forest or the plain, he could not endure captivity. He pined under it and faded. It was all

too plain that he no longer had "the freedom of the city." The rubbings of the harness were apparent.

"Something the matter with marriage, old man?" I asked him with the freedom of the Fourth Street of the eighties.

He looked down at me sadly, leaning over and tapping me on the shoulder with one knotty forefinger.

"There's something the matter with everything."

That was the last time I saw him. Many familiar figures still walk the street, but his is missing.

VIII

CHOICE spirits who walked Fourth Street in 1885 will recall the house occupying the southwest corner of the street and First avenue south. This old mansion had formerly been "the Deshon place." Many who still walk the street remember the light brick house, the slender trees in front of it, and the long sloping stone walk from the front entrance to the street. When I expressed an interest in it to a wandering English printer who was complaining of the street because "you were up to your (ensanguined) hanches in mud in spring and hover your (similarly stained) 'ips in snow in winter," he informed me that the place was a boarding house, and a good one, and that he had lived there.

Noting my interest in this relic of the past, he glanced casually at me and then went on to unfold a tale that

had to do with his experiences in the house. He had rented a room there upon his arrival in the city. When he secured this apartment, he had seen on the bureau a set of artificial teeth that some former occupant had apparently abandoned. Feeling that the unknown owner might be incommoded, he called the landlady's attention to them. She informed him that they had belonged to old Mr. Blank who had died in the room the week before. She would have them removed at once.

But in the hurry of the day's work she neglected so to do and, upon his return in the evening, the teeth smiled grimly at him from the bureau. As it seemed foolish to make trouble about things so palpably innocent of harm as abandoned teeth, he said nothing, trusting to time to care for the matter. This, he claimed, was a serious mistake as the sequel proved.

I stood open-mouthed by this print-

er's case as he picked up the handfuls of type and "threw in" his regular daily task of "distributing," unwinding, meantime, to the tenderfoot the romantic coils of his narrative.

"I was dead to the world," he continued, "from the fatigue of the first day in a new city, and for other reasons, and I retired early. At midnight I awoke with a start and by the light of the street that filtered in at the windows I saw an elderly gentleman at the bureau. I saw him slip the false teeth into his mouth, look at himself in the glass with a satisfied air and start to walk towards the door. My first thought was, 'The old man has come for his teeth.' My second thought was that the landlady had told me that he was dead. I spoke out sharply, 'What are you doing here?'"

"He vanished instantly," continued the printer, looking at his line of type and then throwing steadily at the case, "but, to my surprise, the false teeth continued on their way to

the door. You will see after a little thought that the teeth being real, even though they were false, walked on, although their wearer, being a spirit, had disappeared. I fetched a yell that was heard as far as Nicollet avenue and when other boarders came in and heard my story and finally detected the false teeth still on the bureau whence they seemed to have returned, they looked at one another and went slowly back to bed, talking in whispers amongst themselves.

"The landlady removed the teeth in the morning and I never saw the old gentleman again. He probably came back for his teeth or was dreaming that he did and I was sensitive enough to catch either his dream or his appearance, whichever you like — and that's all there is to it."

I have always been glad that my Fourth Street had a good, sensible ghost to start with. They are none too common and when they appear we should make the most of them.

IX

GOOD hunting was found along Fourth Street even after it became half civilized and the rabbits had ceased to run. This hunting was not by dog and gun accompanied. Some small technical knowledge of the values of rare books, a bit of nerve to back investment, and a reasonably small salary made up the necessary equipment. While still nothing of a woodsman along the street, I watched with interest and some awe a muscular and well dressed young bank clerk cautiously prowling—or perhaps I should change the whole hunting metaphor and say that he was flitting from flower to flower; that is, from old bookstore to old bookstore. I scraped an acquaintance by rubbing along the neighboring bookshelves and Mr. E.

D. Brooks explained to me the why and wherefore of "first editions," of "rare and valuable books," of "association books," and of "autographed books." For the first time I listened to the soul warming palaver of the book-hunter and collector. During these lectures, when I drank all in like mother's milk, Mr. Brooks took me to his home to view his treasures and, incidentally, sold me four first editions of Thoreau that he had concealed under an old sofa. They were not the rarer ones, but rare enough to start one on the downward path. I yielded to temptation with frightful avidity and fell rapidly and gladly. You see, where it is possible to "pick up" a \$10 book—or a \$1,000 book for that matter—for ten cents, the element of greed necessarily enters, and all the Yankee within one responds to that appeal.

Attempts have been made to explain why there were so many rare and valuable books on the counters

and shelves of the old bookstores of Minneapolis in the eighties and early nineties. The reason doubtless was that settlers from the East brought with them the books they valued, sometimes whole libraries. As they grew wealthier they also bought books. As these pioneers began dropping from the ranks, their old books were crowded out by newer ones and were consigned to the attics and back rooms. In course of time, without expert knowledge of the bargains concealed among them, the newer members of these families sold the old collections to the old bookstores. And here we were, among the first that ever burst into those uncharted seas! When I think, even today, of some of the old volumes I have held in these hands and then have left on the shelves for reasons of financial timidity or because of uncertain knowledge of the "business," I grow all trembly and goose-fleshy and prickly along the scalp.

And the old bookmen that "the trade" has known on Fourth Street or near it! It would take an artist to put them properly upon paper. Thompson's! Do you remember Thompson's on Fourth Street next to the *Journal* office? Later, when rents went up by leaps and bounds, he moved down the street somewhere below the Oneida block. Glorious moments I have spent in Thompson's! I still see, when I close my eyes at night, shelvesful of early editions of Emerson, Thoreau, Whittier, Longfellow, and Bayard Taylor in the old green, black, and brown cloth. What might have been among them, or what unknown literary treasures were there, I dare not even hazard a guess. Thompson had the books and he prospered financially until he felt the coming on of the strange mental aberration that he was cheating his customers. It was the result of abnormal conscientiousness, for no man was honester. He

talked with me about it one day, and explained that the fear was always with him that he was short-changing his friendly customers. Having just bought a book I thought to try him out. I suggested that perhaps I had not received all the change coming to me on the late deal. Mr. Thompson smiled. The abnormal fear was absent in this case.

But the delusion so grew on him that he gave up a good book business and began raising chickens in the East. Whether he recovered, or whether the delusion persisted and he felt that he was short-changing the hens and securing their eggs and persons without equivalent, I do not know. He was the first and only bookseller I ever knew who worried about the financial fates of his customers.

And there was Raymer, whose sidewhiskers are so imperishably connected in my mind with first editions; and an Old Roman named Al-

exander who was taciturn and studious and knew books, but who sometimes looked upon the rum that entangleth; and Goodyear on Hennepin and Nevius on lower Nicollet, the latter of whom the subtle alchemy of "the trade" had transformed into "Devious"; and "Jim" Adair who has survived them all and is here today, but not in the old place. Ah, that old corner of Washington and Nicollet! Many happy moments have I spent there. In days of sorrow it furnished nepenthe, in days of mirth it added to the gladness of life. Many a precious little volume have I borne triumphantly away and do hold to this day and will never part from, while life retains her seat in this distracted globe. (Business of slapping forehead.)

We bought a great deal of trash first and last and helped the old book business by starting and feeding the flame in others, but we did not become immensely wealthy from the

bargains we secured in early or rare editions and literary plunder. At least I did not, though I have not quite despaired, even yet, of finding a copy of Poe's "Tamerlane," "By a Bostonian."

On the way home one day I stepped into Raymer's from force of habit and, from a dusty bunch of books that had just come in from some shed chamber or attic, I brought up a little thing in boards marked in Mr. Raymer's well-known hand, "25c," on the corner of the first blank page. It had a suspicious look and awakened echoes in the cave of memory. Where had I read something about it in the volumes of booklore we studied on nights and rainy Sundays?

During the dinner hour and for the remainder of the evening, the ghost of the book walked. I began a search in Foley and other booky books, and found that *The Narrative of James Williams* was an anony-

mous Whittier, a tract suppressed for some reason by the Anti-Slavery Society — and it had brought at auction the princely sum of \$100! And I had left this book marked twenty-five cents on the shelf! Raymer's was long since closed. It was now after 10 o'clock. Had anyone secured the treasure before the shop had closed at 6? I did not sleep well and was awakened at times during the night by terrible dreams.

At 7 in the morning when the doors were being opened I was in front of Raymer's shop. In a casual manner I wandered along the shelves, stopping now and then to examine a book, till I came to the ledge where the *James Williams* should be.

It was there!

The shop whirled around. The boy looked at the marked price at my suggestion and tossed the book on the counter with a slap that raised the ancient dust.

"A quarter."

The luxurious breakfast of Edmund D. Brooks was just being placed on the table when I arrived. He gave one startled glance at *The Narrative of James Williams*!

I always felt rather sorry for Mr. Raymer who needed the money; but then, he never knew about it!

James Williams has since sold as low as \$4.50, the high price drawing out other copies from attics and basements. But it is worth more than that and should be bought "on sight," if properly priced.

X

IN searching through the mental records of a long past Fourth Street, running not quite back to the time when E. R. Barber lived on the street at its intersection with Second avenue south, it has occurred to me that I remember the date when the bluff of being abnormally busy and driven beyond the powers of endurance was first put up. It was known as "hustle." Everybody in the business world assumed the breathless air of tremendous activity. Did you call on a business man, he received you brusquely:

"Well, what can I do for you?"
"This is my busy day," "Hustle, get it off your chest," "I'll give you just five minutes," and "Get a move on you," were some of the watchwords.

Men with no particular errand

were seen rushing wildly up Fourth Street and having arrived nowhere were seen a few minutes later rushing as wildly back. They were "hustling."

This old hustle and assumed brusqueness was broken up by a joke. The hustler, when approached by someone who wished to do business, would greet him:

"Well, I'm in a hurry. What do you want?"

And the standard reply became:

"I would like a few kind words."

Some of the more genial and universal natures of the street were undisturbed by all this undue and artificial activity and continued the even tenor of their ways up and down the street. Mr. E. A. Bromley might have been hurried a little at times, but he never hustled. Yet he was always "on the spot." Mr. Bromley, in the days of his most fruitful activity, was staff photographer of the *Times*, a lamented organ that housed

itself on Newspaper Row. He was only slightly flurried one morning when, on alighting from his street-car at the corner of First avenue and Third street, he ran head on into a gentleman engaged in murdering his wife. Forgetting those things which were behind, Mr. Bromley remembered only that he was staff photographer. Unlimbering his camera and wheeling into position, he secured a negative of the "tragedy," "shot" the policeman in the very act of making the arrest, secured a negative of the excited crowd and a photograph of the murderer as he was held pending the arrival of the "wagon." Then, in full consciousness of duty done, the staff photographer went on his way to the office to take whatever assignment was on the book. As the finest case of what was then known as "Johnny-on-the-Spot," this event has been celebrated in Fourth Street song and story.

As purveyor-general to antiqua-

rian and historical and bibliographical tastes, Mr. Bromley is now generally and warmly known the length of the street. If an old photograph is required or one of the publications of the old St. Anthony, Mr. Bromley has it somewhere concealed.

To a happy habit of his, that of caching literary or antiquarian articles of virtu in the newspaper offices of Fourth Street and then of forgetting the places where they are concealed, I owe many a valuable bit of *Minneapolitana* of which I could not have afforded the purchase. Mr. Bromley had an old pewter teapot and pitcher cached for years in a deserted compartment of Jim Gray's desk. At the end of the third year, after he had forgotten it, I took home the teapot. Thoughtless persons might consider this hard on Ed, but I was careful not to let him know about it.

Mr. Bromley has today, and I know the exact places, valuable anti-

quarian plunder cached in two spots in the *Journal* morgue and library. There is another hiding place elsewhere in the *Journal* annex; also some costly material concealed under an old dusty drawer in the *Journal* editorial rooms. From this magpie characteristic of Mr. Bromley's, I may yet profit considerably if all goes well.

Warm-hearted and happy in disposition and manner, Mr. Bromley never yet hated person or thing, but I did discover one day that he had a great distaste for Christian Science. I began at once a collection of Christian Science literature and saw to it that Mr. Bromley was secretly supplied from an almost unfailing fount. Many a quarter of an hour have I spent, concealed somewhere, awaiting a favorable moment for slipping a bit of the distasteful literature into his overcoat. Among the greatest joys of my Fourth Street has been the privilege of leaning far out of the

office window and detecting Ed proceeding innocently up Fourth Street with a *Christian Science Sentinel* protruding noisily from his outer pocket. Many a package of his, left for an unguarded moment somewhere about the office, have I undone and enriched with a choice bit of the offensive literature. Whenever Ed hung up his coat to do a bit of writing, I have been there to fit out the pockets with tract or paper. All his caches about the office I have liberally supplied. It has taken time and hard work, but what of that?

Sometimes, after finding this literature about his person, Ed has returned to the office and "demonstrated," but always in so cheerful a manner that I could never lay it up against him. Without him, my Fourth Street would be desolate indeed.

XI

WHEN I looked out on the Fourth Street of 1885, the early generation of splendid old men who had placed it on the map was still passing the newspaper window. I recall the well known figures of Col. John H. Stevens, Dorillus and H. G. O. Morrison, the former the first mayor of Minneapolis; H. G. Sidle, Sumner W. Farnum, R. P. Russell, William S. King, W. D. Washburn, Joel B. Bassett and Isaac Atwater, arm in arm; S. G. Gale, Harlow Gale, Levi M. Stewart, Judge Hicks, Captain Cross, and numerous others whom I regarded with more or less reverence. They mirrored the generosities of the street and they had all of its sturdy, underlying conservatism. They suffered in their fortunes from its back-

sets and they profited in still greater degree from its growth and its waves of prosperity. Of such a type was the pioneer and miller whom I have called Henry King, who would have been known to his generation, perhaps, as "Old Cap King" had he really lived. After his disappearance from the street, I was one day sent to his house to ask, for the newspaper, certain questions that no one else could answer. The effort for him was a difficult one, but he did what was necessary. As he sat there in his big, easy chair in his home on the hill and looked out over the city, now growing rapidly in every direction, he knew that his day along Fourth Street had passed and that his time was at hand.

Captain King did not ask the physician what his chances of living were. He assumed in his conversation that this was his last sickness and he spoke of it in so commonplace

a way that the doctor was thrown off his guard.

"Something comes up in my mind," said the old man one day, "I'd like a little more time. Can you give me a month?"

The doctor thought it entirely possible.

"Do I get a month? If I do it will be a favor."

"Well, I should say 'yes' probably."

"You're not guaranteeing anything, I see."

"You know as well as I do that I can't do that."

"But a month is a possibility then."

"Yes, a possibility."

Sitting there alone and looking out over the city that he had helped to build, the city that had made him, he found himself going back forty years to the time when, a young man of thirty, he had engaged himself to marry Carrie Gates. They had

quarreled over some unimportant matter, very unimportant it seemed now, and the affair had been broken off. King had kept away from Miss Gates after the trouble, and she, equally stubborn or proud, had said to herself, "he better keep away, if he knows what is good for him."

During these forty years, neither had married. They had met occasionally, but no word of reconciliation had been spoken. Few persons knew of the old engagement that had so long lapsed. Now the captain began to think much about Carrie Gates. He put the thought away from him, but it returned. Finally he sent for her.

Miss Gates was not entirely unprepared for the captain's letter. She had heard the rumor that he was not expected to recover. But it was a matter, she told herself, in which she felt no particular interest. To be sure an engagement to marry had at one time existed between them, but

that was forty years ago. A generation had come and gone since then. The captain was one of its successful men. Yet somehow she felt that he wanted her. Perhaps he needed her. A vague uneasiness took possession of her mind and she scanned the columns of the newspapers. Miss Gates had been a vigorous and blooming girl and she was a sturdy and powerful woman. In her the world would never have suspected anything like sentiment. But her thoughts dwelt much on the old man alone in his big house on the hill. The uneasiness in her breast was a growing one.

"If I was superstitious," she said, "I should say that Mr. King was thinking about me."

Then the letter came. She knew it at once and felt a flutter that had long been strange to that ample bosom. It read:

Dear Carrie—The doctor gives me a month or so to live and I have been

thinking that I would like to see you. I don't know as you want to see me much, but it keeps coming to me to want to talk to you, perhaps more than anything else now, and as I can't get out, I thought perhaps you would come up here some afternoon. It gets pretty lonesome here looking out of the window and it keeps me thinking. If you come, telephone the housekeeper when you will be here and she will clear the way so that we can have a talk. If you don't, all right, and no harm done. Anyhow, I am Yours truly,

HENRY KING.

Miss Gates replied to the captain's letter at once:

Dear Henry—I will be glad to come up to see you and will be there tomorrow afternoon, Thursday, if nothing hinders. Hope you are better and not as bad off as you think.

Yours truly, CARRIE GATES.

After he had read the letter, the captain sat with it for a long time in

his hand, looking out of the window.

When Miss Gates arrived at the house, the housekeeper told her that the captain had had a bad night.

"But he slept all the morning," she added, "and as his mind is set on seeing you, the doctor says that it makes no difference. Perhaps it will do him good."

Captain King was propped up in his easy chair with a pillow at his head. His feet were on a chair and covered with a blanket. He held out a large and hairy hand now whitened by sickness, and then took Miss Gates's hand in both of his.

"It's good of you to come, Carrie."

"I sort of felt you were thinking about me."

"I was. And I have thought a lot about you since I have been here. If I had it to do all over again, I would make any kind of a concession to get you here to stay, or rather to have had you here to stay."

"O, Mr. King—"

Tears flowed down Miss Gates's face and fell on her dress.

"You see, Carrie, I've had about everything I want, I guess, in this world's goods and in about all other ways—except you. I didn't mind it so much when I was in the fight—but come to get here, it is somehow different."

"O, Henry."

"Yes, I know. Draw up the chair and set there a while."

Miss Gates wiped her eyes and drew the chair to his side. Somehow her hand sought his again and did not leave it.

"Look down over that city there! It's pretty fine here. I can see it grow, almost. It's going to be one of the big cities of this continent. Nothing can stop it. I've helped lay the foundations and I know that they are all right and are going to hold. We are going to have a metropolis here—and I've seen it start and begin to grow. It's great! I

love it. I wouldn't have missed it for anything."

He wandered on about the development of the country, forgetting what he was going to say to her, but Miss Gates understood as well as if all had been said that he was telling her that all the love and resourcefulness and energy of him, which he had thrown into the city and the development of his own fortunes in connection with it, had been stolen in part from her. He had his city and his part in its wonderful growth and development, it was a man's work, but now—he wanted her. He needed her to share it all. She let him wander on, not saying much in reply, but now and then pressing his hand to show that she understood.

"We might have had children, Carrie."

"Yes."

"And seen them growing up around us now. Some of them would have been men. They'd have

had their own families by now. Think of that. Forty years is a long time looked at in that aspect. Otherwise it isn't so much."

"I'm sorry —"

"You are! You're sorry too?"

"Yes, I'm sorry!"

"Thank God for that. I ought to have come around, but it was that damned pride, I suppose."

"O — we were equally at fault."

"I suppose so. Do you remember that buggy ride across the prairie over to the Jenkins place?"

"I do indeed!"

"The moon came up over the edge of the prairie on the way home."

"And we stopped and looked at it."

"Yes. Remember Jule Boynton?"

"Yes, indeed. She married Ed Jones."

"Yes. Her boy was elected governor of Arizona last fall."

"So I noticed. She was smart."

"One of the brightest girls I ever

knew. It was the Irish in her, I guess."

The talk drifted into easier latitudes and the tension was relieved somewhat. But the old man soon went back to his dreams.

"Our boy might have been elected governor or something."

"Yes."

"He'd have made a good one."

Together they sat hand in hand looking down on the city, on the smoke curling from its chimneys and on the new skyscrapers that were just beginning to pierce the blue of the horizon line. The old man's pride in it all rose again.

"It's great, Carrie! I shan't see it. You will see some of it, but you won't see it all. It's going to be one of the great cities of this continent. It isn't any state affair. It's the head of this great river valley! It's a continental center! It's great! I'd like to see it. What do you think will be right here, where we are set-

ting now, in another hundred years? No man can prophesy! I've seen a lot of it and been much of it, but I've missed something even better, I guess. Now I know that you feel the same, it's helped me a lot—this talk has. You'll come again, Carrie?"

"Yes, I will. I'll be here tomorrow afternoon."

"What is it the poet says about this pleasin', anxious being? You used to be a great reader."

She quoted the familiar lines:

*"For who, to dumb forgetfulness a
prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er
resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful
day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering
look behind."*

"That's it. I've been casting that longing, lingering look behind, I guess. You'll come tomorrow?"

"Goodbye, Henry."

She stood and, retaining her hand, the old man drew her slightly towards him. She came freely and kissed him full on the lips. Then she drew his head to her breast and let it rest there, while she patted his gray hair, gently, as a mother might have done.

She did not see him again. In the morning he was gone. But even before this last goodbye, he had taken care to remember her. The city newspapers, a few days after her visit, printed this item of news:

"The filing of the will of the late Henry King, widely known as a pioneer miller, who died last Friday, revealed a romance the aged man had guarded during his long life of single blessedness, when he left practically his whole wealth to Miss Carrie Gates. Although both the old-time lovers had been in the same city for forty years, they had lived their lives apart."



A BELATED PIONEER OF 1885

XII

"SOME day," said John the Janitor, when I asked him about his Fourth Street, "we'll all be gone and other darned fools will be walking here."

I looked for a long time today at a photograph of the street as it was in the sixties and the early seventies. Old country road flavors hung about it. The usual dusty grass and thistles were in its borders and it had ragweed and goldenrod decorations. Morning-glory vines and the eternal woodbine adorned the porches of the white houses. The front yards showed hollyhocks and asparagus. These white houses had the clean, old-fashioned, country smells of woodshed and kitchen and the mustier but no less pleasant odors of spareroom or parlor.

The street has become harder and

surer. The once quiet corners roar with the traffic and voices of the city. The simple mud-road has become iron, asphalt, and cement. The white houses and wooden churches have given place to stone, steel, and brick in towering structures. How must this new street look to the children who were born in these lovable old homes? Sometimes I feel the sadness of it all coming up through the pavements.

The keys in which this olden time music are set are the keys of chance and change.

I have felt sometimes that it might be pleasant to live on a street that never changes, where the old home places wait through the ages, where there are no chances and changes, unless there are a few happy ones for variety's sake, and where, when we are once at home, we are at home forever. I have had waking dreams of turning a corner of life and of establishing a residence on the Fourth

FOURTH STREET 127

Street of Security in the City of Permanence. It may not have golden pavements nor "everlasting spring" abiding as a climate, though I find no fault with either.

I shall look for this other Fourth Street—some time. For I feel that it should run—somewhere.

100-800-0000



